



**Commission on Forensic Science  
Standards and Certifications Advisory Committee (SAC)**

**Minutes - FINAL**

May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

10:00 AM – 11:21 AM

**Committee Members Present:**

Jamie Armstrong, CODIS Administrator, DFS

Johna Esposito, Quality Assurance Manager, DFS

Major Daniel K. Meadows, Delaware State Police, Special Operations

Lynda Kopishke, Retired Forensic Nurse with ODS

Ashley Wang, Laboratory Manager I in FCU, DFS

**Committee Members Absent:**

Julia Vekasy, Chief Forensic Investigator, DFS

**Minutes:**

1. Welcome, Call to Order – Johna Esposito
2. Review and Approval of Minutes from February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019. - Approved
3. Welcome Lynda Kopishke!
4. Review of SAC's Addendum Report to Commission – just mentioned that we did give that to the Commission at the last meeting. SAC is now done with last year's goal.
5. Forensics at Other State Organizations: The Commission asked our committee to gather information on all the FSPs (forensic service providers) across the state. One possible direction for Forensics in the State of Delaware that has been discussed previously by the Commission is to move toward one centralized Division that houses all FSPs in the state. The information the SAC is gathering helps inform that discussion.

**FSPs in the State of Delaware and Possible Consolidation of Those Services**

1. Review list of other forensic organizations (from Major Meadows)

- a. Don't think there is a large quantity of FSPs that aren't directly associated with the law enforcement mission.
- b. Some FSPs are in partnership with DSP and other agencies.
- c. State Police component parts
  - i. State police provides services for other ~44 police agencies in DE and some of those other agencies (esp. larger ones) do have some FSPs of their own.
  - ii. State Bureau of Investigation (SBI)
    - 1. Maintains criminal histories and has some identification of biometrics. For example, latent fingerprint identification.
    - 2. Some capability with facial recognition (only compares to mug shots, although could also reach out to DMV)
    - 3. Software gives potential matches and trained professionals confirm
  - iii. State Police Crime Lab – falls under homicide unit.
    - 1. Alcohol analysis
    - 2. Maintain the tools for breath (calibration of breath testing)
    - 3. Do have training in tool mark comparison also.
    - 4. Can also match hair and fiber
    - 5. Also use other resources (external vendors or FBI) for some of these things.
  - iv. Forensic Firearms Services Unit – a component of Homicide Unit (in separate location)
    - 1. Technician certified to enter results into NIBIN. National Integrated Ballistic Information Network
      - a. Recover shell casings from crime scenes (could be recovered rounds) and can take markings from original fire arm and look for comparisons from other known recovered evidence. i.e. could match shell casings from two shootings to one gun.
      - b. One person does the initial entry to NIBIN and a separate person will do a check/review of that.
    - 2. Training in serial number restoration to restore a serial number on a firearm where it has been obliterated
    - 3. Training in gunshot residue testing. Helps determine if someone shot a gun.
  - v. Homicide Unit
    - 1. Force Science Institute training that is understanding a human's ability to process information and make decisions as it pertains to force.
    - 2. Get into video evidence.
  - vi. Collision Reconstruction Unit – One in every county.
    - 1. Accident scene reconstruction

2. Use tools to reconstruct
3. Skid mark analysis
4. Compressed vehicle measurements to determine angles and speed
- vii. Evidence detection units – Some oversight from Homicide but each Commander for Criminal unit in each county oversees. There are EDUs embedded within each troop.
  1. All crime scene evidence recovery at any significant crime scene
  2. Photography and videography
  3. Hair and fiber recovery
  4. DNA recovery
  5. Latent fingerprint recovery
  6. Collection of blood samples and blood spatter analysis
  7. Impression analysis
- viii. High Technology Crimes Unit – Falls under command of Intelligence Unit
  1. Computer forensic examiners certified to do digital forensics like any computer, cell phone analysis, any digital media, tablets, ipads, etc.
  2. Recover and extract data
2. Major Meadows could gather more information on the certifications, on the tools they use, etc.
3. Note that, at this point, all the DSP services are spread out, they aren't all under one roof.
4. Additional Discussion about FSPs in DE
  - a. Disciplines that don't get used often in DE
    - i. Discussion of how we don't really have a forensic document review in Delaware and may be good to incorporate that at some point.
    - ii. Are some disciplines not used frequently because nobody in DE is really trained to do it or is nobody trained to do it because the investigation just really don't need it. – Major Meadows says usually the latter.
    - iii. Pathology at DFS sends out for forensic dentistry and no forensic dentist in DE. Just not called for enough to have one full time.
  - b. Ashley asks if these people are civilian. Primary coordinator for latent print analysis is a civilian employee and forensic firearms unit is also civilian and the crime lab is also civilian.
    - i. The officers are a police officer first and then could get trained/transferred into one of these specialty units.
  - c. Discussion of how certificates are less valued than certifications.
  - d. The county PDs have their own evidence folks and may have one person trained to do digital forensics, but then may also bring things to DSP for examination if it exceeds what they are trained to do. DSP does majority of firearms comparisons, although Wilmington may be able to make NIBIN entries.

## 5. Pros and Cons of Having all FSPs Under One Roof

- a. Discussion of how Statewide Forensic Service Providers all under one agency might be most efficient and effective, even though we would still want the various “arms” deployed across the state.
- b. Is there benefit to get rid of replication of services? Would it be cheaper? Maybe, but may also not be consistent with the culture of each agency wanting to be self-sufficient. Agencies may argue they can do things quicker in-house.
- c. Is there benefit to remove some of these services from DSP so that the people who end up doing the work are fully trained, via a BS or MS degree, to do the work. The PDs, though, are careful to assure that the people doing the work have the background and expertise to do the job and experience that would stand up in court.
- d. When same evidence is used in different disciplines doesn't it make sense to have disciplines under the same roof?
- e. We're likely suggesting a greater consolidation than other states (i.e. even our biggest city wouldn't have its own services)

## 6. Is it of value to look at other states to see how they structure their forensic services?

- a. Ashley gives example of how MD had a main lab and satellite labs.
- b. Once we see how other states work, we may want to see what standards and certifications they have and that can inform our decision on how important standards and certs are.
- c. Jamie pointed out that we may already have some information from the Survey on other organizations that have a variety of services in their organizations.

## 7. Side Note: Discussion of how it may be helpful for DFS units to be more involved in evidence collection (i.e. FCU, DNA). Danny says DSP can help arrange DFS employees coming to speak at DSP meetings to help get out information and have more dialogue.

## 8. Potentially visiting the other organizations – tabled for a later discussion, once we have more information gathered and are farther along in the process

## 9. Possible information that could go in our report:

- a. List of FSPs in DE currently, along with possible recommendations for expansion of services.
- b. Space needs. – how much at the main building and how much at potential separate units (i.e. evidence maybe stays stored at county or troop level?)
- c. Existing and recommended certifications and accreditations.
- d. What other states are doing.
- e. What we recommend in the way of consolidation.
- f. Pros and Cons of consolidation.

## Wrap Up

1. May want to have a goal of an initial draft (one that includes some subset of the information listed above) this year and then add something more specific next year, as requested by commission.
2. To DO
  - a. **Danny** – create a table that is clear and well defined on the FSPs in the state
  - b. **Lynda** – MD research
  - c. **Jamie** – list pros cons
  - d. **Ashley** – VA, PA, Jersey research
  - e. **Johna** – RI research
3. Next Meeting Day/Time
  - a. If Sept 9<sup>th</sup> is the Commission, then we will meet after that. If it is Aug 5<sup>th</sup> then we will find a different date.
4. Maybe have Director Evans stop by at the next meeting to just give us an overview of what the conversation was surrounding consolidation.
5. May want to visit a state where we like their lab system or have them here to speak in the future.
6. Adjourn – motioned, seconded, all in favor.